

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Digital Repository

---

Volume 29

Number 4 *The Iowa Homemaker* vol.29, no.4

Article 5

---

1949

## A Jessica Weise Original

Janet Sutherland  
*Iowa State College*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Sutherland, Janet (1949) "A Jessica Weise Original," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 29 : No. 4 , Article 5.  
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol29/iss4/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [digirep@iastate.edu](mailto:digirep@iastate.edu).



*This original dress designed by Jessica Weise won her a New York fashion school scholarship—a chance to get an inside look at her vocation before graduation.*

# A Jessica Weise Original

by Janet Sutherland

**YOU DON'T** have to wait until after graduation to try a taste of your chosen vocation. Several home economics departments here offer you the chance to gain inside professional experience. Just such an opportunity took Jessica Weise, a textiles and clothing junior, to New York City last summer.

Jessica won a scholarship offered in an annual contest by the Ethel Traphagen School of Fashion in New York City. She and Ruth Shean, who graduated last June and also received one of the scholarships, entered the contests through the applied art department which receives entry blanks each year.

There, on 52nd and Broadway, Jessica and 25 other scholarship winners studied their profession from the ground up by observing pattern companies, fabric manufacturers and retailers besides attending regular Traphagen art and textiles courses.

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day the students took courses in illustration life, textiles, color theory and costume design. The textiles and clothing courses were much like those offered here at Iowa State, Jessica says. However, the illustration and life courses were new and gave her the drawing essentials a fashion designer must know. In addition the students had access to the Traphagen fashion library—rated the best in the country.

## *New York Atmosphere*

Though she learned a lot about the specific elements in her field, Jessica believes that the general atmosphere of the noted fashion school and the contacts she made with New York helped her the most in finding out what to expect in her career.

Jessica's winning entry in the contest was a dress designed for campus wear, fashioned on simple, bold lines. In addition she drew a coat and an evening dress to be eligible for the nation-wide competition.

At the end of the 6 weeks' course, the students presented a fashion show, modeling several of their original designs.

Besides her regular fashion courses, Jessica received an all-around picture of life in New York during her 7 weeks stay there. Living in Greenwich Village, she caught much of the color of the heterogeneous city. "The Village," as Jessica calls it like a born New Yorker, has much of the typically artist atmosphere—music at all hours, huge vans, gaily-colored front doors, flower vendors and picturesque apartments. Enthusiastic store owners provided a study in themselves, hawking wares and bargaining on almost every purchase in their medieval-type bazaars spread over the sidewalk. Discounting Hollywood publicity, Jessica said that the garret painter with his hand-to-mouth existence isn't often found in the higher class village artist colony.

## *Fashion Store Interest*

Of course the stores with their fashion merchandise were of most interest to Jessica. From the bargain bazaars in "The Village" and on the lower east side she got a change of scenery on famous Fifth Avenue. There the elite shops feature no advertising on the store fronts, but attract customers by their lush window displays. Some stores even advertise perfume by scenting the windows.

Christian Dior's house was fascinating to the young designers. There they saw semi-mass production of clothes designed by the man who is now making American adaptations of his French fashions. Most outstanding to Jessica were his buckram-stiffened "animated designs" which give even the most listless wearers a moving, alive look.

Commenting on other previews for winter, Jessica tells of highlights of other fashion-centered shows. New acetate rayon fabrics were shown to the students in a show by a rayon company there. The use of nylon in many types of apparel was seen in almost every shop and fashion review. At John Frederick's millinery shop she was impressed with the huge, floppy velour hats, many worn slantwise on the head.

Jessica is anxious to get back to New York—only next time she goes she wants to arrive ready for a career in the fashion center she previewed last summer.